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Currents and counter-currents in Canadian
politics!... Fredericton (N.B.), 1893.

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CURRENTS AND COUNTER-CURRENTS
— IN —
CANADIAN POLITICS.



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Currents and Counter-Currents

IN

Canadian Politics!

OR

*A BRIEF ENQUIRY INTO CERTAIN FACTORS
WHICH TO-DAY DOMINATE POLITICAL
LIFE IN CANADA.*

BY

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1893.

CURRENTS AND COUNTER-CURRENTS

— IN —

Canadian Politics.

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From a casual survey of a decade of domestic events it would appear that in Canada, to a large extent, the honorable and dignified profession of politics has degenerated into a mere trade; and success—as determined by the present standard of emolument and profit, rather than by the criterion of unsullied honor and trust, by which it was formerly distinguished—largely depends upon the extent of individual attainments in the arts of chicanery, insincerity and dissimulation.

While this is, in a large measure, unfortunately true, there is, however, a considerable body of worthy men engaged in political life, who, Pericleslike, scorn the merely mercenary opportunities of their profession; who, by virtue of the high order of their intelligence and integrity, adorn the sphere of their calling, and whose reputed virtues exercise a salutary influence over a large number of ambitious aspirants to legislative careers.

In Canada the political profession is paramount: literature, art and science seem quite subordinate to this widely prevailing, popular pursuit, and, therefore, it naturally commands a powerful influence in the formation of a national sentiment. The ennobling effect exercised by our universities and colleges upon many of our young men seems to become wholly lost when they enter the assemblies of state; the rapturous impressions formed from early acquaintance with the heroic and wise of the world's history appear to fade; self-interest, association, or prejudice, as the case may be, ministers to their case, independence is surrendered—often integrity as well—to the

domination of Tories or Whigs, Conservatives or Liberals, and in the light of party interests alone largely conduct their deliberations.

This condition of affairs is, perhaps, more fully illustrated in our Federal than in our Provincial assemblies. At the present time the transactions of Parliament are freely, though seldom fairly, published in public press, whereby the mass are daily acquainted with its deliberations. Solely from party spirit these proceedings are frequently characterized by the most ungenerous rivalry; and the frequency of these exhibitions has engendered a commendable indifference to many trying instances of personal aspersion, which, a century ago, would doubtless have sought redress in pistols at twenty paces. If a so-called whig promotes a measure which suggests the slightest departure from the conventional methods of his British ancestors, his tory opponents will probably charge him with disloyalty. If, upon the other hand, a tory advocates a scheme in the light of the traditional belief of his party, his whig adversaries may impeach him with servile admiration for ancient examples and disrespect for the rights of the people.

While we deplore the baneful consequences of modern partyism the necessity for the existence of legitimate parliamentary divisions is fully apparent. No one can reasonably imagine a legislative body, at once intelligent and serviceable, which, under all circumstances, could exist as a unit of thought and a unit of action. No, diversity of opinion and dissentient discussion are the means employed for removing the husks of doubt and obscurity, in order that we may reach the kernel of a just conclusion. It is the boast of the age that nowhere to a greater extent than in our halls of state abound the same privileges of liberty and freedom in discussion; and nowhere are these same qualities more eloquently exercised. In no other field of pursuit of an equally honorable and responsible character, does the legal standard of admittance exact of the candidate less stringent qualifications of intellect or estate. And nowhere do we find greater examples of perfidy and dissimulation, or the more frequent occurrence of unfulfilled pledges and unredeemed obligations. Not that we

reluctantly condone these offences, were they as they are not, merely the faults of human irresolution and human aberration. But they are most frequently the conscience offerings of the high party devotee upon the altar of modern political partyism. Thus, in the discharge of an office of a most exalted position of citizenship, in performance of the functions of a most sacred appointment of state, we continually observe political nurslings, who regard duty to the exigencies of party as primarily important, and concern in the measure itself quite subordinate.

The cardinal vices which, to-day, tarnish the reputation of the once noblest of vocations have been acquired wholly through repeated occurrences of party rapacity and party cupidity. Within the past two decades, with but few exceptions, the most notable examples of public injustice and public oppression are traceable rather to party zeal than to defective legislative sagacity. And in Canada to a greater extent than elsewhere within British dependencies can be discerned the domination of this illusive party influence. If, for example, we turn to the British Parliament, where partyism had its birth, and wherein have been discussed the most momentous subjects that ever engaged the human mind, where, upon broad lines of intelligent and honorable procedure, the possible virtues of partyism have been most freely exercised and enjoyed, we find that during a whole session of her national deliberations, unless in bills of a private character, strictly party divisions have been unknown. If, during periods of incessant national activity, a salutary and harmonious spirit has so characterized transactions of such vital import, why has party in our land acquired the haughty dignity and sacredness of caste?

In Canada a so-called loyalty is the recognized standard, not of political, but of party fidelity, and, in political circles, possibly no word in the English vocabulary has suffered greater perversion of meaning, or acquired a more idiomatic reputation than this word "loyalty." In the profession of politics it has about become the monopoly of one party, and with a certain class, during an election campaign, its constant

reiteration as a rallying measure is found to be as effective as the famous Slogan war-cry of the Scottish Highland chiefs. The vicissitudes of a century have not yet subdued the harsh language with which Dr. Johnson expressed himself concerning the contemporary tendency of the term "patriotism;" and we apprehend that the erudite historian of another century hence, while directing his researches into the political literature of our time will be no less amazed at the marvellous efficacy of the campaign cry of loyalty than at the credulity of an age that permitted the practice of such imposture.

In political parlance, loyalty, as Thomas Carlyle once observed concerning liberty, requires a new definition. A generation ago Ruskin told a British audience that the meaning of loyalty is faithfulness to law; but to-day we hear a great deal of another sort of loyalty peculiar to our own times, and which is all very well, for loyalty, when wisely indulged in, is under all circumstances a most commendable quality. But loyalty appears to best advantage at home, and with the individual, since whatever tends lawfully to enhance the interests of the individual and the community tends also in degree towards the consummation of national prosperity. It is well to exhort men to be loyal, as it is also to bid them be charitable; but these votaries of loyalty inculcate dogma and doubt before they offer instruction. But when homage to party becomes confounded with devotion to country, and political sophistry has the credulous ear of the masses, we are no longer surprised to find the popular mind possessed of such heresy. This ill-conceived notion of loyalty constitutes the cardinal vice of partyism, and is co-extensive with the length and breadth of the country; and he who has once publicly espoused the principles of a party and afterwards wanders from the faith of its teachings is by its apostles hailed as a turncoat and renegade, and any attempt at independence of choice or of action is likely to win for him the reputation of an imbecile or a coward. As with a Mahommedan dervish the more vehement his declamation and gestures the greater will be his success and renown; so with the other fanatics, the more they extol the reputed merits of their party the greater the distinction they will achieve.

Thus we perceive is originated what is ostensibly regarded as a most patriotic and noble sentiment, but one which is also most pretentious and false. A sentiment that proscribes liberty and freedom, through which alone mankind is enabled to attain its highest possibilities—a sentiment, indeed, finding no response save in the pernicious ideal which gave it birth. Almost every species of political offence is traceable to the excesses of “party loyalty,” and thousands of the electors of this country are continually becoming the servile dupes of its delusive innovations.

There is however another party method—an invention of no modern date, but one which has in recent times acquired notoriety for the infallible celerity with which it can accomplish the capitulation of the minds of the masses. The tactics which we have already briefly considered, if at all understood to arouse reflection, appeal to the reason, which, not unlike a complex microscope or sextant, the uninstructed mass knows not how to advantageously employ. But patient instruction may so burnish that dormant faculty that it may finally shed a hopeful gleam of intelligence and the error be removed. But when an appeal is addressed to the passion and senses there may be kindled a fierce flame which immediately consumes and extinguishes reason, and leaves its mortal temple desecrated and bereft of that humanity and sympathy, which are the divine pledges of man having been created in the likeness of his God.

It has been observed that all’s fair in war time; but the truth is, never was there a more dangerous axiom spoken. During seasons of national hostilities there may be permitted a wide latitude for diplomatic indulgence, but there also are lines beyond which to encroach would be to incur the gravest perils—the compact of international treaties must be inviolate. To wantonly invade the sanctity of that which ministers to the spiritual hope and the spiritual life of Christian man is to-day an offence that knows no palliation. To deliberately influence the minds of fellow-men with a malevolent and acrimonious spirit of religious aversion and religious animosity is to under-

mine the institutions of society—to disclaim the monitions of conscience.

These calumnious reflections upon the adherents of the Roman Catholic faith must no longer continue. The institutions of our country have fostered a democratic spirit that permeates every avenue of our national existence, and which decrees that moral and intellectual qualifications alone shall constitute eligibility to office or position, and depraved and ignoble is the mind that from mere aversion of creed would deny his fellowcitizen a position of honorable trust.

A fallacious impression seems to be abroad among Protestants, which regards the appearance of a Catholic for public position as a signal that some sinister object by his co-religionists is about to be privately sought. This misapprehension is, in many cases, directly traceable to another still greater. There are in existence certain institutions which profess to labor for the maintenance and dissemination of the Protestant faith, and which, also, are popularly credited with entertaining, at least, an unamiable attitude towards the opposite branch of the Christian religion. Thousands are possessed of the opinion that these societies thus constitute the sacred repositories of the Protestant faith, and when the opportune moment arrives to accomplish some important purpose, their less scrupulous adherents gird on the sword of sectarianism and give the signal for battle. These become the willing vassals of astute political manipulators; their numbers become rapidly swollen by additions of terrified people, who, in the delirium of excitement, offer insolence and reproach to their unoffending Catholic fellow-citizen and neighbors. The consequence invariably is that society becomes disorganized; the amenities of friendly association become estranged, and aversion and distrust are reinstated; and religion itself has been made the scapegoat of disgraceful party jugglery.

When this matter is dispassionately investigated there will be found little to warrant such fallacious conclusions. On the contrary, it will be observed that the Protestant statesman who, in the discharge of his regular duties, with fair-minded-

ness and justice, seeks the legitimate interests and welfare of the Catholic people, invariably receives a full measure of their confidence and grateful esteem. Take, for example, a notable case in Ireland. Possibly never in the history of Irish legislation has there been an individual—though nursed in the bosom of the church—who, by the Catholic people, was regarded with greater admiration and homage than Charles Stuart Parnell, who erringly fell by the way-side ere his great battle was ended. Still more recently we have another illustration of this spirit of confidence and faith which is being manifested towards our compatriot, Edward Blake.

The vindication of the Roman Catholic element of the population, in this relation, calls for no polemical discussion. In the exercise of rights of citizenship they must ever enjoy precisely the same privileges of Protestants. Canada recognizes all citizens as veritable peers of her realm, and the great quality which distinguishes the governments of to-day from the governments of the ancients is that of Beneficence, and the intelligence and liberty of the present will never again permit a test-act to oppress the statute book of a nation. Can it be shown that either the interests or the existence of a faith, which, in devoted ministration to its people, has with such marvellous prosperity and vigor survived the vicissitudes of nineteen centuries, would, to-day, be materially affected by any legislative favor or recognition which might be accorded it? Or, can it be shown that the number of her adherents would be lessened, or the secular endowment of her organization be reduced, if the test-act of Charles II was restored? Assuredly not one iota! "But," answers someone, "I am still persuaded that the Catholic church, through appeal or coercion, seeks advancement in restraining mental development; that it protests against the state education of its youth, and is altogether intolerant of the modern public school education." This, if true, is certainly a most discouraging testimony to the advocate of equal rights. But we question the whole postulate, and in so doing we must bear in mind the various factors which have operated in the social and intellectual development of man.

It is historically admitted that the lamp of instruction, which, for fourteen hundred years, had, with clear solar light illuminated the Christian world, and which she permitted none to extinguish, was during several subsequent centuries, from mistaken and ill-founded apprehension, suffered to shed but a feeble ray of light within her ecclesiastical empire. But throughout the record of mankind, from his earliest existence far into the stage of his highest civilization there also appear countless examples of error, oppression—nay barbarous inhumanity, which like a loathsome eruption on the surface of his history, painfully remind him of what has been !

The truthfulness of this precept is abundantly illustrated in the history of all nations and communities of men, and nowhere more fully than in those nations which have been the pioneers of intellectual and religious freedom.

This being true, it becomes us to ascertain from proximate sources the present attitude of the Catholic Church in relation to the matter of education; and this can alone be accomplished by seeking an accurate measure of her toleration. However, we must avoid the error of confounding with the toleration of the church instances of individual narrowness and illiberality of mind—of misapprehension and doubt. In the civil government of nations these same qualities have been productive of the gravest ill, and in ecclesiastical affairs the consequences have been no less disastrous. For example, in the sixteenth century, we find an arbitrary standard of the church's toleration in the illiberal treatment accorded Galileo's discoveries, in which, as one of her most devoted members, Pascal observes she exceeded her power in so doing.

But an accurate measure of her present toleration can be found in the famous Mount Hamilton observatory, recently erected in California, through the princely munificence of her zealous son, the late millionaire James Lick. The welfare of a community is imperilled in proportion as the light which is dawning upon all sides is resisted; and the light of the church, which for a period grew dim, now sheds abroad a brilliant lustre reflecting the highest and most liberal culture of the

age. Who will venture to assert that the scholarly attainments of the late versatile Newman afforded an objection to the Catholic hierarchy conferring upon him the most distinguished honors at her command? The large percentage of Catholics annually attending the universities and normal schools throughout this Dominion, their industry and eminent success, is a sufficient refutation of this calumny that undeservedly rests upon them.

Within the early decades of this century, a most animated controversy was waged—memorably participated in and supported by that Titian statesman, Mr. Gladstone—in which it was held on one side that the propagation of religious truths is one of the principle ends of government as government. Nevertheless, the assumption to-day of a doctrine fraught with such momentous issues may scarcely disturb the equanimity of many good people, who otherwise might experience the greatest consternation over a proposition to introduce into public schools the rudiments of religious instruction.

With the state, however, should remain the duty of instructing the young in the elements of a purely secular education; fitting them thus indiscriminately for their future individual maintenance, as it would later train them for the nation's defence.

All thoughtful minds have observed with deep interest the recent deliberations of the Roman Catholic church in the United States, with reference to attendance on the public schools. For upwards of a year an energetic movement, headed by Archbishop Ireland, in favor of Catholic children attending the state schools has been in progress. As might have been anticipated, this step towards having the Protestant and Catholic children who together play in the street, also taught side by side in the state schools, has from many sides within the pale of the church itself encountered the most resolute opposition. Be this as it may, there has gone forth from the Vatican at Rome a decisive voice, which, while recognizing possible remote ill-consequences therein involved, cordially approves of and endorses this liberal movement. Previous

to the settlement of this matter a communication from a prominent Catholic in New York city was addressed to the Commissioner of the Bureau of Education at Washington concerning the question of some mutually satisfactory arrangement between Catholics and Protestants in regard to public schools, and it may not be uninteresting to learn with what spirit it was acknowledged. In reply, the Commissioner of Education in conclusion observes:—

“While I believe that the education in the public schools should be entirely secular, yet I feel, with the majority of Americans, that there should be some arrangement made by which the public schools should recognize in a formal manner the importance of religious education.

“I can think of no better device than the one adopted in the schools of St. Louis, where any parent may obtain a permit for his children to be absent, on one or two occasions each week, from the school for an hour or more each time, in order to take lessons in religion at the neighboring parish church.

“Very many Catholics in St. Louis used to avail themselves of the privilege, and have always believed that the formal recognition of the desirability of religious lessons tended to a good result. Whatever may be the wisdom or unwisdom of my personal views in the matter, I cordially agreed with you and with the views of the majority of the people of all denominations in the desire that the Catholic children should attend the public schools, and that some arrangement might be made satisfactory to all parties.

Very respectfully,

W. T. HARRIS, Commissioner.”

Who can fully estimate the future influence of such a frank and liberal declaration, coming as it does from the chief educational officer of a nation comprising sixty millions of free and intelligent people? Whithin our own land this delicate question seems not yet harmoniously disposed of, and while as observed it is clear that an universal and non-religious curriculum should constitute the national standard for the education of our youth, it is also within the range of possibility to perceive that in the text of the official letter already quoted may be found articles of agreement for the amicable adjustment of a very grave problem.

From this brief and imperfect review of this feature of party manifestation, it can no longer be reasonably held that there exists on the part of Catholics towards Protestants this antagonism in secular affairs.

But in their party devotion blind fanatics would fain poison the wells of the understanding, and drive out from their murky retreats the monsters hate, revenge and oppression, to feast on the sacred vitals of friendship. The enquiry may now be made why party interests should be permitted to so widely influence and inspire the political institutions of this country. Why should the people of this young Canada proudly seek in the character of either toryism or whiggish—the productions of a bygone and revolutionary age—their highest ideals of political authority, and wisdom? Or, why exult in the measure of distinguished honor, which an alliance and servile obedience to either confers, when we remember that originally the name of the one party was held synonymous with the outlaws of Ireland, and the name of the other with the rebels of Scotland? Assuredly, that which was formerly an insult and a reproach is now by a strange process of political evolution esteemed an honorable distinction!

The disposition in recent years to substitute for the older names the distinctive appellations of Conservative and Liberal does not in the least ameliorate the zeal with which the respective parties yet pertinaciously cling to the assumed authority and traditions of the former institutions.

The origin of partyism in English History dates back two and a half centuries, to the period when the two parties became respectively known as the Cavaliers and Roundheads; later they became Tory and Whig, and which in their turn have given place to the more familiar Conservative and Liberal divisions.

Thus it may be observed that since the organization of the two parties in British politics, upon three occasions from current influences alone they have successively acquired new and distinctive names, while in themselves they have continued intrinsically identical in the arrogant assumption of rights—

one party ever professing to remain close to the monarch and the throne and the other to stand by the people.

These three phases correspond to as many stages in their respective periods of the peculiar organization of society and the intellectual status of the people, and may not inaptly be compared to the three ~~same~~ stages in the life of man, viz: youth, manhood and old age—growth, maturity and decay. It is to be hoped that in Canada, at least, with the present phase of partyism, shall cease the prevailing rule of arbitrarily dividing the political assemblies of the country; suffice that the merits and issue of a measure alone determine a division.

It will doubtlessly be claimed that this argument is imbued with the rosy tints of an ideal political millennium, and be regarded as merely idle speculation. Nevertheless it must be apparent that in this country there is an entire absence of the conditions and influences under which these peculiar parties were developed, and have thus far flourished; and if this be admitted they can only for a time remain as a semblance; things not real, delusions. Hopefully for the future of Canada behind all this resides the powerful influence of a widely extending franchise, commanded by a people free, intelligent and untrammelled by prejudices of rank or birth, which, when voluntarily and unitedly exercised for the common weal shall yet moderate and finally extinguish the stupid acrimony of party strife and party itself.

Canada shall yet be compelled to abjure her present political creed; otherwise prepare to surrender her hope of national greatness. Nothing more certainly menaces the future of this promising country than this blind adherence to party; and it is also paradoxical to note that, although similar vices may be known to both parties, Canada thus far could possibly have spared neither.

The baneful influences growing out of party spirit; the thralldom imposed upon the civil service; the unscrupulous abstraction of money from the public treasury for the maintenance of electioneering funds—extension of the franchise

virtually multiplying the means of corruption—the insalutary issue to which all this conduces is certainly to be deplored, as favoring the development of national hereditary moral leprosy, descending from sire to son. Is it too much to hope for, that, incoming time, from the ashes of the crumbling present, there shall arise a body of Canadian representation which will courageously co-operate for the advancement and the preservation of her interests, divided by no arbitrary boundary—individual conscience and judgment alone drawing the line? History, it has been said, repeats itself—not that human progress and human intelligence continually pursue identical courses, but rather, like the planets in the solar system, are governed by an indestructible force which ever leads them on and *forward*—and we know that among the ancient institutions of government in Greece and Rome, the attainment of the subject's protection and the conservation of his interests were deemed the highest ambition of the statesman: and also, in England, for centuries previous to the appearance of party, that nation co-operated with such success as to merit the admiration of her allies and the respect of her enemies.

Canada, to-day, extends to her people a system of manhood suffrage, and once bid the electors honorably discountenance the prevailing vices of election campaigns, and resolutely exercise the prerogative which they enjoy, and soon the most astute and rapacious politician will become inspired with a degree of sterling loyalty and responsibility that has not hitherto been dreamed of. Nor will the possibilities of this or any other country ever be fully measured while the relations of the elector to the representative are other than these. The voter must sooner or later realize that he is in the arena of politics something more than an animated pawn; that he too, is a real intelligent actor; that from his relation to the state his office also involves a sacred right; though it consist merely of an imitation of a rude act of ancient hero-worship, he is, nevertheless, guided by an honorable principle, a noble impulse. Mankind cannot long run counter to the current demon-

strated truth and fact, and he who would follow the teachings of philosophy must in mind be a free and brave man.

Incidentally with this subject occurs another pertinent and vital question, the destiny of Canada. In the light of recent and prolix discussions upon this matter, there appear formulated, at least, three distinct replies: First, union with the American Republic; secondly, a closer alliance with Great Britain as contained in the proposed scheme of Imperial Federation, and, thirdly, the attainment of independent nationhood. Without going into the elaborate details of this profound subject, but, confining our attention more especially to the tangible and proximate field of enquiry, we shall briefly survey the several positions of the case.

First.—Regarding annexation with the United States—with high admiration for that energetic and industrious Republic—it is our opinion that such an arrangement is neither desirable nor expedient. Canada abounds with rich stores of natural treasures, far in excess of the frugal requirements of her industrious sons, and spreads throughout forest and plain the rare promise of a home for scores of millions yet unborn; therefore suffer not the impatience of our colonial youth, for the immediate acquisition of a precarious affluence and ease, to barter the lawful heritage of our remotest posterity.

Nevertheless a pessimism born of indolent discontent augurs melancholy ill for the future. It declares that the large proportion of our immigration virtually utilize Canada as a halting post on the route to the United States, and that our population is but slowly increasing. Whether or not this grim recital be absolutely true need not engage our solicitude at present: but if we accurately estimate the extent and resources of Canada, it is fair to conclude that, sooner or later time will arrive when that great Republic itself shall, from a plethora of population open widely the flood-gates of emigration that will find a home in this hospitable land. If possible allow the foundations of our national character to be formed from inherent and native influences alone, before we suffer

alien and heterogeneous examples to tincture our national instincts. A salutary immigration is worthy of encouragement; but unrestricted and indiscriminate immigration of a people impelled by a spirit of adventure, alone in quest of an imaginary *El Dorado*, as an apology for indolence and vice, offers a problem not yet divested of all hesitation and doubt. Wide as has been the experience of the American Republic in this matter—marvellously indeed has her population thereby been swollen, and rapidly have been multiplied the industries of her people—the wisdom and future consequences of such a policy shall alone be found in the verdict of history. The philosophic statesman should experience greater concern in the character and standing of the individual citizen, and the fidelity with which he administers his interests than in a laborious attempt to swell the census. Like the Athenians, seek to be distinguished for our parts and our industry rather than for multitude of souls.

But let not Canadians be possessed of the notion that an inflexible system of regulated tariff constitutes the most certain means for the discouragement of annexationist views. The moderate annenationist, the most patriotic citizen may become aggressively disposed if it can be demonstrated that with mutual concessions the circumstances of the average Canadian can be advantageously improved, but owing to erroneous interpretation of national dignity and national duty that privilege is denied him. This feature of the question has of recent date been fully discussed, and which, if approached with the tolerant spirit of a philosopher, instead of the prejudice of statesmanship, is capable of an honorable and advantageous adjustment. As an example of industrious activity and national intelligence, freedom and wealth, the United States stands formost among the mightiest of nations, and the deep interest that Canada should experience in her national welfare should be second only to that which she entertains for the mother country. Thousands of Canada's sons and daughters have there sought and found happy homes and

honorable lucrative positions ; and stoical indeed is the Canadian, though himself an heir to the glorious liberty and freedom whose birth pangs he knows nothing of, who, through the haze and unrest of a century, can perceive no cause for that noble struggle which wrested from Great Britain the brightest gem in her empire. But Canada to-day possesses a gem of greater national beauty, which the zeal and devotion of her sons are rapidly shaping into the signet which shall yet seal the immutable decrees of her national unity and national identity—forever inviolate.

Secondly—Imperial Federation. —

In dealing with this view we shall recognize two distinct classes of Canadian advocates, viz. : one a respectable body, who believe the ideal form of government to consist of a monarchy, and that the highest degree of intellectual, social and industrial capabilities are attainable only under the sway of the British sceptre ; the other is represented by a contingent, who despairingly apprehend that so long as we continue merely in the rude guise of colonists we cannot hopefully look forward to all equitable recognition by the magnates who exercise and control the decrees of British opinion and British society.

It has also been urged that alone through a closer alliance with Great Britain has Canada the assurance of her national defence and protection. Upon reflection it must be apparent that the United States possibly affords the most aggressive quarter from which we might anticipate attack, but their war drums have ~~not~~ yet sounded no signal for battle. On the contrary their example in honorably settling by arbitration the most momentous disputes arising in international affairs, is most significant, and shall yet command wide imitation. A higher civilization and culture shall ere long expunge from mankind this warlike instinct which still lingers with him, and which indicates the barbarity which originally engrossed his nature and his surroundings. If, during the coming decade, the demon of war rouses not the slumbering armies of Europe, then it will be safe to predict that the great battles

of the world have been fought. The practice of modern warfare must cease with the perfection of its terrible art; and to-day no nation adequately equipped can engage in prolonged action without draining the resources of an empire. The intelligent world is alive to this vital fact and to-day the recent example of enfranchised Germany is not wanting in a moral. This nation of bristling steel and immense squares of cannon is now manifesting a decline of her Teutonic savageness and fierceness, and recently the courage and resolution of the people—already oppressed with military exaction—have nobly rebuked the impetuosity of a despotic Kaiser in a prolonged resistance of his imperious demands for additional tributes for military purposes. Canada need entertain no anxiety in this direction, though her consolation and hope be an assurance that the will and the heroism of her sons will ever vindicate her honor, and defy the hand that threatens her degradation.

But we have no evidence that this despairing view is shared in by Englishmen themselves, and from a Canadian standpoint it certainly betrays an affected sentiment of national incapacity and self-distrust. However, since this fallacious doctrine has assumed such portentous character, involving as it does the question of inferiority in the rank of the Canadian, and the superiority of his British kinsman; of the intelligence and ability of this country to adequately provide for the needs and to protect the interests of its subjects, it may not be uninteresting to briefly examine its merits.

Taking intellectual and moral worth as the standard of a man, we enquire: Is the average Englishman in any respect superior to the average Canadian? Is he possessed of credentials certifying that he, by inalienable birthright, inherits greater intellect, courage or industry? A greater legacy of gold and history alone, he undoubtedly has—the acquirement of which has cost much suffering and tears—and this to him is a source of inestimable delight.

But, my Canadian brother, what of our stock of gold? True our purses have not yet suffered the distemper of plethora

but, on the other hand, has not the bounty of half a continent, rich in natural resources, ministered liberally to our wants? Have the manly vigor, moral excellency and industry of a young country to be computed by a pile of gold coins? Did not a frugal decree of that sagacious lawgiver, Lycurgus, centuries ago, attack the luxurious habits of the Spartans—long accustomed to wealth—and prohibit the currency of gold and silver coins, substituting iron; immense quantities thereof representing but a trifling value? The conditions which originated in this step led to Sparta acquiring the distinguished character by which she has subsequently been known to history. Wealth far surpassing the fabulous treasure of Cæsar lies hidden, nay is disclosed, in the broad surface of this land, and with a marvellousness exceeding the pretensions alchemists of old, industry's hand needs but touch the most worthless products when it becomes changed into gold, or into its nearest equivalent for human existence—bread. It is true that the unsculptured creations of Canada's history, in the main, yet repose in unborn minds and unwrought deeds, but centuries hence those characters shall, life like, leap forth to posterity, hewn not by the sword and the battle axe of a barbarous and rude age, but by the cunning hand of intelligence, industry and national equality.

The pillars of the imperious temple of Canadian history already tower aloft, and if yet the superstructure, contains no glorious scene emulating the conquest of an India, it is also spared the sad memory of an inhuman Hastings and a tale of widespread woe. If as yet it remains unadorned by the distinguished presence of a Bacon, a Chatham or a Burke, it is also wanting in example the rarcity of a Marlborough, the barbarity of a Jeffreys; and the perfidy of a Charles I. If yet it cannot exult in the claim of ancient and illustrious nobility, it knows not the reproach of denying the title of the meanest citizen to a fair apportionment of this country's life sustaining domain. If yet it remains unhallowed by the memory of fierce fires of intellectual and religious thralldom,

its portals are bathed in the glorious dawn of universal liberty inseparable from citizenship itself.

But why seek further to multiply instances disproving the illusion of Canadian inferiority and inadequacy? We all bear towards that venerable and noble-minded woman who weilds England's sceptre, the sincerest affection and esteem; and for her island home a respect becoming the land of our fathers. We delight in the recollection that the English, if not the earliest, have at least been the sincerest champions of freedom; that if not the most liberal according to our ideal, they have at least, been the justest according to their own. We admire the valor of her heroes; the wisdom of her sages; the sagacity of her statesmen; the culture of her institutions, and the antiquity of her history. But the glory of the past is the lawful heritage of the present. Beneath the surface of the Canadian flows the rich blood of the Anglo-Saxon; deeper still, through successive intermediate races—side by side with the Greek and Roman—pulses the nomadic blood of the pre-historic Aryians.

It is not therefore possible for Canada to prosperously exist as a nation wholly freed from alliance and dependence of Britain? As a recollection of the sorrows and misfortunes of the parent frequently purifies and ennobles the character of the child, in like manner may the example of England's errors and short comings serve this the latest and most promising of nations a wise and cautious monitor. The royal presence in England commands not the awe which it inspired a century ago, and at that date, its power was infinitely more relaxed than it was in the reign of Henry VIII. Hundreds of thousands of wise and orderly citizens of Europe are, to-day, seriously computing the enexpired remainder in the lease of hereditary rule. During the past the security of English rule has consisted in the faith reposed in the sovereign; in the future it must depend upon the faith of the people in themselves. Among free people their is a growing desire and impulse towards the popular establishment of

the nation's chief, and the enfranchised voice of Great Britain will yet undermine her system of hereditary rule, and who shall say for the worst? For the destinies of a nation are linked with the social and material development of its subjects, and the attempt to perpetuate an exclusive and ancient system of national rule, would be as hazardous and impracticable as an undertaking to substitute for the present methods of education the mediæval system of monachal teaching.

Inheriting as we do the resolution, wisdom and courage of our ancient sires; possessed of a vast country, nearly equal in area to the continent of Europe, with a soil rivalling in fertility the great seed beds of the world; whose parallels of latitude interpose hundreds of thousands of square miles between the grape-producing vine of the south and the frost-bound lichens of the north; whose territory abounds in an immense wealth of natural resources, locked up in the seclusion of the forest and the dark chambers of the mine; endowed with institutions of learning of the highest order—and a system of common school education whose curriculum is the culture of the most advanced nations of the age, need Canada waver in an opportune claim to "*independent nationhood?*" Time will come, when her sons, faithful only to the obligations of their sacred trusts, will cast aside the fetters of the past, and, consecrating the liberty of the citizen and the freedom of the nation, shall wisely sway half a continent.

The birth of nations: the convulsion of revolution; the decay of kingdoms, the fall of empires—what are these but cycle peals from the great horologe of Time, which ever solemnly tolls the fleeting epochs of mortal ambition and mortal existence, and in the great future when tyrant time may in the exuberance of civilization depopulate the teeming multitudes of London, and may behold the stately pile of Westminster crumble in unheeded decay; when the revered silence of that great sepulchre of Britain's illustrious dead shall by day give place to the echoing footsteps of the foreign traveller, and by night to a melancholy hoot of the owl that seeks a perch in its

broken moss-grown wall: when the gaunt spectres of hunger and famine shall forever have fled the green shores of Ireland, and the memory of her sorrows has faded from the minds of her surviving sons ; when the recollection of Parisian luxury and vice shall have ceased with the decline of her ambitious children ; when the perusal of the dim tale of Russian cruelty and Siberian suffering shall have blanched the cheeks and suffused the eyes of the decendants of our children : when a solitary remaining corps of German soldiers in tattered uniforms shall languish by her parks of abandoned artillery ; when perchance the fierce strife of adverse nationalities, and the hostile interests of an alienⁿ peopled and crowded nation shall have induced disorder and the segmentation of that great Republic lying to our south, then will the glory and honor of Canada's nationhood be achieved— not by the spoils of foreign conquest, or by the ignoble barter of inherent right but by industry's invasion of the solitary wastes of the land, scattering along her triumphal march the abode and sustenance of increasing millions ; secure only in the imitation of those immortal examples which down through the checkered history of our race have at all times commanded the admiration and esteem of the heroic and the wise of all enlightened nations !



